



Frequently Asked Questions - Accreditation

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation in Public Relations is a voluntary certification program for public relations professionals.

What is the purpose of Accreditation?

The purpose is to unify and advance the public relations profession by identifying those who have demonstrated broad knowledge, experience and professional judgment in the field. The program seeks to improve public relations practice. The designation Accredited in Public Relations (APR) signifies a high professional level of experience and competence.

Why earn Accreditation?

Accreditation demonstrates that some individuals have knowledge of public relations strategy and best practices; an understanding of ethics; and experiences which set them apart.

The reasons to earn the Accredited in Public Relations (APR) credential are both professional and personal. The APR credential is increasingly becoming valued and used as a screening criteria for hiring and professional advancement. Research has shown that Accredited public relations practitioners earn more money than their non-Accredited counterparts. Many seek to earn the APR credential as part of their own professional growth goals, which often include lifelong learning, professional ethics, and a commitment to the best practices in public relations.

Who administers the Accreditation program?

The Accreditation program is administered by the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB), a consortium of eight leading public relations organizations, including:

- [Agricultural Relations Council](#)
- [Asociación de Relacionistas Profesionales de Puerto Rico](#)
- [Florida Public Relations Association](#)
- [Maine Public Relations Council](#)
- [National School Public Relations Association](#)
- [Public Relations Society of America \(PRSA\)](#)
- [Religion Communicators Council](#)
- [Southern Public Relations Federation](#)

The UAB includes representatives from each public relations participating organization and a chair.

What are the Universal Accreditation Board's responsibilities?

The UAB oversees the Accreditation program and provides a balanced blend of backgrounds in a number of public relations specialties. This group of senior-level Accredited members meets several times a year. Day-to-day operations are administered at PRSA Headquarters. Responsibilities of the Universal Accreditation Board include the following:

- Develops and implements policy for the program
- Oversees ongoing research on the knowledge, skills and abilities to be assessed in the Accreditation process
- Develops and maintains the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations
- Reviews appeal cases
- Grants Accreditation

How old is the Accreditation Program?

The program originated in 1964 and was administered by PRSA until 1998. The Universal Accreditation Board was formed in 1998, after a group of public relations organizations came together to unite several certification and examination programs under one program, the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations.

Who is eligible?

Members of UAB participating organizations who are involved in the professional practice of public relations, or in the teaching or administration of public relations courses in an accredited college or university are eligible to seek accreditation. Military and armed forces civilian public affairs practitioners also are eligible to pursue the APR+M credential. Earning the APR+M, practitioners must meet the APR standards and additional requirements to demonstrate knowledge, skills and experience unique to military public affairs. The UAB recommends that anyone choosing to pursue the APR credential have at least five years of professional experience in public relations.

What is the fee to take the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations?

The fee is \$385. Several of UAB's participating organizations offer their members a rebate for a portion of the Examination fee as a member benefit. Check with your organization for details on rebates.

Please note *that examination fees are non-refundable or transferable*. Examination fees will be forfeit if a candidate does not cancel or reschedule his/her computer-based examination appointment by noon at least two (2) business days prior to the appointment date. If a candidate misses his/her appointment, he/she will not be rescheduled and will forfeit all fees paid.

Candidates with disabilities covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [UAB staff](#) for details about paperwork that needs to be filed.

Is Accreditation good for life?

Yes, with fulfillment of Maintenance of Accreditation requirements and continued membership in a UAB participating organization. Maintenance requirements must be met every three years for PRSA members Accredited after January 1, 1993, and other UAB participating organization members Accredited after January 1, 1998. To maintain the credential, Accredited practitioners must accumulate the required number of points through continuing education and professional development, professionalism or service categories, as part of the Maintenance of Accreditation Program. This further strengthens the value of the APR credential and keeps professionals actively up to date and involved in the public relations profession.